

# WEEKLY BULLETIN



CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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GUY P. JONES  
Editor

## NEW HEALTH LAWS ENACTED

Public health is of importance in National defense. The Legislature recognized its importance by including the Director of Public Health in the California State Council of Defense, and one of the activities that he is conducting in the development of measures for strengthening National defense is the enforcement of laws that pertain to nutrition, pure foods, and drugs.

Much has been published regarding vitamins, but the general public has little knowledge relative to the subject. Too often, reference is made to vitamins according to their designation by letters of the alphabet, rather than by the foods that are rich in the respective vitamins. Because many false statements relative to the medicinal value of certain vitamins have been issued, a new section was added to the Health and Safety Code in the last session of the Legislature, which is designed to prevent the mislabeling and issuance of false statements relative to vitamins. Under this new section "any concentrated substance, represented for use by man because of its vitamin content when medicinal claims are made on the label, shall, on its label and in its advertising, bear the common or usual name of each vitamin on which such use is based. If such use is based on the content of Vitamin A, Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> or thiamin, Vitamin C or ascorbic acid, Vitamin D, riboflavin or nicotinic acid, the label or advertising shall bear or contain a statement of the proportion of such vitamin expressed as International Units, Pharmacopoeia, or other accepted standard units." In other words, any statement relative to vitamin content on any commercial product, must be strictly truthful, without exaggeration, and must conform to required standards.

An amendment to another section of the Health and Safety Code provides that the advertisement of a drug or device shall be determined to be false if such drug or device is represented to have any effect in tuberculosis, ulcers of the stomach and varicose ulcers. These three conditions are added to a long list of diseases that is already specified in the same section of the code.

The food and drug laws are enforced by the Bureau of Food and Drug Inspection, which is one of 15 bureaus operating under the State Department of Public Health. These laws refer particularly to prohibiting the adulteration, mislabeling, misbranding, and false advertising of any food or drug product dispensed within the confines of California. Under the law "A food shall be deemed to be adulterated, if it has been produced, prepared, packed or held under insanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth."

The last Legislature provided that if any mineral oil has been added, mixed or packed with a food product, it shall be deemed adulterated. Mineral oil has no food value and it can not be classed as a food. There are preparations on the market similar to mayonnaise and salad dressings, which are made with mineral oil. Such products must now be labeled conspicuously with the statement that the material is *not* a food.

A new section of the law now prohibits the addition of any chemical substance containing sulphites, sulphur dioxide, benzoate of soda or any such chemical preservative to fresh meat. The Bureau of Food and Drug Inspection has consistently prosecuted any unscrupulous meat dealers who have used any sul-



phites for the preservation of fresh meat. Heretofore, the use of such preservatives has been under an implied provision in the act, while in the new law these preservatives are specifically mentioned by name.

Hamburger, in the past, has been made up of a wide variety of ingredients. It is one of the most popular foods consumed by the American public. Commonly known as hamburger, it is in reality chopped or ground meat. In order that a legal definition of the product may be provided, the Legislature passed an amendment which now becomes effective, stating that this food shall be deemed adulterated if it be chopped meat or hamburger, or ground meat sold as such, and if it contains any substance other than the striated muscle of cattle to which is added not more than 15 per cent of fat derived from cattle. This means that hereafter hamburger can not be adulterated with lungs, spleen or other organs, nor can tomato juice be used as a coloring agent to give the product a bright red color. Only the striated muscle of cattle to which is added not more than 15 per cent of fat can be sold as hamburger or chopped meat.

In the past, some meat dealers have added as much as 35 to 40 per cent moisture in meat products by pumping the veins full of brine or pickling solution. This has added greatly to the weight of the meat, but has adulterated the product enormously. Under the new amendment the moisture of meat that is cured in brine or a pickling solution is limited to not more than 10 per cent. There is nothing in the amendment, however, that prohibits the introduction into meat, or adding to meat, of common salt, sugar, wood smoke, cider vinegar, wine vinegar, sugar vinegar, glucose vinegar, spirit vinegar, pure spices, saltpeter, or nitrate of soda, provided that the original weight of the product shall not be increased more than 10 per cent, and for products that are smoked or cooked be no more than 1 per cent of the green or original weight.

California has long been known as a great wine producing State, and since wines from European countries are not imported at the present time, California wines have come into great favor throughout the whole Nation. The production of wine is one of the larger industries of California, and the State Department of Public Health has been given power to establish definite standards for wine and wine products. For several years past, high standards of purity have been maintained and no wines have been shipped out of the State under a California label unless they have conformed to the standards. A constant vigil is kept over these products by the Bureau

of Food and Drug Inspection. The standards for California wine, in fact, are higher than those of the federal government. All wines in California are now produced under sanitary conditions and whenever any lot that does not conform to the required standards may be found, it is kept off the market either by destruction, blending, or distilling into brandy. The last session of the Legislature strengthened the powers of the State Board of Public Health by definitely clothing the board with authority to establish standards of purity for this product, which is now in great demand throughout the whole country.

These are some of the new laws that pertain to food and drug products. The inspectors of the bureau are prepared to enforce these new provisions. During the course of the year many hundreds of samples of foods and drugs are taken for analysis in the State Laboratory, and thousands of inspections are made annually, not only for the purpose of maintaining standards in quality, but also to enforce those provisions in the Food Sanitation Act that require the maintenance of the utmost cleanliness on the premises where food products are manufactured, sold or dispensed.

Very few laws pertaining directly to communicable disease control were enacted during the last session of the Legislature. The School Code was amended, however, to provide that individuals employed in the schools in positions requiring certified qualifications must present to the Superintendent of Schools or County Board of Education, a certificate from a physician or surgeon licensed under State law, showing that such person has submitted to a physical examination within three years last passed, and has been found free from active tuberculosis. In the past there have been cases in which school teachers suffering from active tuberculosis have been employed regularly. The health hazard to children from this source may be very great and this new amendment to the school code gives recognition to the potential menace and provides definite legal measures for its elimination.

Epilepsy has been a reportable disease for several years. Physicians are required to report all cases to local health officers who in turn report to the California State Department of Public Health. It is a well known fact that automobile accidents are often caused by drivers who suffer from epilepsy and who lose consciousness while at the wheels of their vehicles. In order that the general public may be adequately protected, and in order that automobile accidents may be prevented, the law was amended by the last session of the Legislature to provide that cases of epilepsy reported to the State Department of Public Health



shall in turn be reported to the State Department of Motor Vehicles, in order that definite restrictions may be made in licensing persons suffering from epilepsy to drive motor vehicles. It is believed that through enforcement of this law many serious accidents involving physical injuries may be prevented.

Nothing is more pitiful than a blind baby. Practically all cases of blindness in infants can be prevented at birth by the administration of a greatly diluted chemical product within two hours after birth. For many years the State Department of Public Health has manufactured this product in its laboratories and has distributed it free of cost to physicians, midwives, nurses, maternity homes, hospitals and any other place or institution where maternity cases are given care. Through this distribution, untold numbers of cases of blindness have been prevented, for the chemical prophylactic is remarkably effective in the destruction of bacteria that might cause blindness. Nevertheless, the product is extremely mild, in that it does not injure the delicate tissues of the eye. The product is in great demand and its free distribution has been a pronounced factor in its wide usage. In order that there may be no loopholes, however, the law was amended in the last session of the Legislature so as to make the administration of the prophylactic mandatory. Any person now, as well as any institution which fails to use the prophylactic for the prevention of blindness or which refuses to obey any rule or regulation adopted by the State Board of Public Health shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon his conviction shall be fined, not to exceed \$50; for a second offense not to exceed \$100; and for a third offense and thereafter not to exceed \$200 for each violation.

These are some of the more important pieces of legislation that were enacted by the 1941 Legislature. While none of these in themselves are of drastic importance, they have been designed to strengthen existing laws and to provide that essential protection to which the people of the State are entitled.

Of the various causes of accidental death, in the United States, motor vehicles lead; indeed, in 1939 they were responsible for 35 per cent of all such deaths, killing a total of 32,600 persons; in fact, a person died every 16 minutes throughout the year from automobile accidents. The number of deaths was two and one-half times those caused by syphilis, equal to those caused by diabetes, and one-half of those caused by tuberculosis. More children were killed by traffic accidents in 1939 than died from diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever, and whooping cough combined. Besides the fatalities, 1,150,000 other persons were injured. Of every five who died in traffic accidents, two were pedestrians.

## REHABILITATION OF TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS

The tuberculosis specialist has made splendid progress in the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis. However, the rehabilitation and after-care have not received the attention which they should. In the rehabilitation of human beings each represents a separate problem. In solving this we must consider the physical, the mental and the emotional. The care of the patient in the sanatorium costs on an average well over \$2,000. We have not been protecting our investment. Vocational rehabilitation, following arrestment of disease, with reasonable after-care is essential. Treatment of the disease without this is economically unsound. Many of the patients return to their homes with unsuitable diet and with lack of facilities which are certainly not conducive to good health. Suitable work is not obtainable and the patient drifts around until the disease is again reactivated.

It is evident that a great amount of money is wasted. Organization and personnel for after-care are essential unless we expect the patient to return again and again for treatment. A high percentage of readmissions to sanatoria might be averted by proper after-care. It is extravagant to give the patient the best care that medical science has to offer while he is in the sanatorium and upon his discharge fail to provide him with funds for decent living and to deprive him of the moral stimulation which supervised work may bring. It is time that we spent as much effort in keeping the patient well, as we do in getting him well.—Harry Cohn, M.D., Director, Tuberculosis Division, Los Angeles City Health Department.

## VENEREAL DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

During the month, in the State laboratory, the following diagnostic tests for syphilis and gonorrhea were made:

Gonococcus smears	348
Wassermann tests	3,968
Kahn tests	3,488
Kline tests	24,724

For the Selective Service Administration, during July, the following tests were performed:

Kline	13,752
Kahn	1,131
Kolmer	1,193

Youth will never live to age unless they keep themselves in health with exercise, and in heart with joyfulness.—Sir P. Sidney.



## MORBIDITY

Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending  
September 6, 1941

## Chickenpox

58 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 13, Contra Costa 1, Fresno 2, Los Angeles 14, Merced 2, Orange 1, Riverside 6, Sacramento 3, San Diego 1, San Francisco 2, Santa Barbara 3, Santa Clara 3, Santa Cruz 1, Shasta 2, Solano 1, Sonoma 1, Ventura 1, California.\*

## German Measles

44 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 2, Kern 1, Los Angeles 7, Mendocino 1, Monterey 1, Orange 2, Sacramento 1, San Diego 9, San Francisco 5, San Joaquin 1, San Luis Obispo 4, San Mateo 3, Santa Barbara 4, Santa Clara 2, Sierra 1.

## Measles

85 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 7, Contra Costa 5, Fresno 1, Kern 3, Los Angeles 17, Monterey 2, Riverside 5, San Bernardino 1, San Diego 7, San Francisco 2, San Luis Obispo 13, San Mateo 1, Santa Clara 2, Sonoma 8, Sutter 1, Tulare 4, Ventura 5, Yolo 1.

## Mumps

203 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 23, Butte 1, Fresno 7, Kern 2, Los Angeles 70, Merced 1, Monterey 7, Orange 4, Riverside 1, Sacramento 4, San Bernardino 1, San Diego 34, San Francisco 7, San Joaquin 9, San Luis Obispo 1, San Mateo 6, Santa Barbara 7, Santa Clara 5, Santa Cruz 1, Sonoma 3, Tulare 2, Ventura 7.

## Scarlet Fever

28 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 3, Kern 1, Los Angeles 15, Riverside 1, San Bernardino 2, San Francisco 3, San Joaquin 1, San Mateo 1, Santa Clara 1.

## Whooping Cough

223 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 47, Butte 1, Contra Costa 1, Fresno 7, Inyo 1, Kern 5, Los Angeles 74, Monterey 1, Riverside 1, Sacramento 3, San Diego 29, San Francisco 4, San Joaquin 17, San Mateo 2, Santa Barbara 12, Santa Clara 6, Santa Cruz 1, Sonoma 2, Sutter 4, Ventura 4, Yuba 1.

## Diphtheria

8 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 1, Los Angeles 3, Mendocino 1, Sacramento 3.

## Dysentery (Bacillary)

8 cases reported from the following counties: Fresno 1, Humboldt 2, Los Angeles 2, San Bernardino 1, San Francisco 1, Yuba 1.

## Encephalitis (Epidemic)

7 cases: Fresno County 3, (Clovis 1, Fresno rural 1, Fowler 1); Kern County (Wasco) 1; San Bernardino County (San Bernardino) 1; California 2.\*

## Food Poisoning

3 cases reported from the following counties: Butte 1, Tulare 2.

## Jaundice (Epidemic)

4 cases reported from the following counties: Fresno 1, Los Angeles 3.

## Malaria

4 cases reported from the following counties: Sacramento 1, San Diego 1, Tulare 1, Yolo 1.

## Paratyphoid Fever A

One case reported from Los Angeles County.

## Poliomyelitis

8 cases: Fresno County (Fresno) 1; Kern County 2 (Fruitvale 1, Arvin 1); Los Angeles County (Los Angeles) 2; Riverside County (Riverside rural) 1; Ventura County (Ventura) 1; California 1.\*

## Rabies (Animal)

11 cases reported from the following counties: Los Angeles 1, San Diego 10.

## Tetanus

One case reported from Los Angeles County.

\* Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the State or those who contracted their illness traveling about the State throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.

## Trichinosis

4 cases reported from the following counties: Alameda 2, San Benito 1, Sonoma 1.

## Typhoid Fever

5 cases reported from the following counties: San Luis Obispo 1, Stanislaus 1, Yuba 2, California 1.\*

## Undulant Fever

5 cases reported from the following counties: Colusa 1, King 1, Los Angeles 3.

## CONFERENCE ON INDUSTRIAL HEALTH

Under the auspices of the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons the American Conference on Industrial Health will hold its Second Annual Meeting on November 5 and 6, 1941, at Chicago Towers, Chicago, Illinois. This organization maintains a public forum for all who are interested in the prevention of disease, injury and disability in industry, and the active supervision and promotion of health in industrial groups.

The opening session will be a symposium on the technical problems of industrial health on the basis that health supervision in industry involves two great principles: (1) the adjustment of the working environment to the employee; and (2) the adjustment of the employee to the working environment, including also the human environment. The technical problems are the result of the application of these principles, and run the whole gamut of public health as applied to industry.

The afternoon session will be a symposium on the economics of industrial health, including: (1) organization and cost of a health service, and (2) discussion on the value of industrial health service to the employer, the employee and the public. The morning of the second day will be given over to a symposium on the social implications of industrial health.

The property damage alone due to motor vehicle accidents in 1939 in the United States amounted to more than \$1,000,000,000 and almost 10,000,000 automobile drivers damaged cars of others or their own. One-half million drivers were involved in accidents which brought death or injury to others. The direct cost of automobile accidents in 1939 amounted to \$3,300,000,000. This included overhead cost of insurance for accidental injuries, wage losses, medical expense, and property damage.

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